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Motorcycle Helmets Marketing Plan

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July 2004

**Department of Transportation
Public Safety Marketing
Motorcycle Helmets
Marketing Plan**

Objective:

The objective of this plan is to provide an outline for recommended marketing activities that should be undertaken to reduce the number of motorcycle riders who die because they were not wearing a motorcycle helmet.

Motorcycle Riders Research Conclusions:

The following are the major conclusions drawn from the research undertaken on Motorcycle riders in Hawaii.

- Wearing a helmet while riding a motorcycle reduces the likelihood of sustaining a fatal head injury. Hawaii appears to have a higher than expected percent of the nation's fatalities.
 - Nationally in 2002 there were 3,244 motorcycle rider fatalities. Riders who were not wearing helmets were 40% more likely to sustain a fatal head injury.
 - In a National study 92% of motorcycle riders who were in accidents were self-taught and most were between the ages of 16 to 24.
 - There were 23 motorcycle fatalities in 2002 in Hawaii. Hawaii has .7% of all motorcycle fatalities in the nation, but only .04% of the total population; significantly above the share for the country.
- There are 18,650 motorcycles registered in Hawaii, therefore we estimate 18,650 motorcycle riders.
 - Of these it is estimated that 43% ride Sports Bikes and 48% ride Cruisers.
- While more Bikers wear helmets than not, there is still significant opportunity for improvement.
 - Overall 62% of Bikers say they always wear their helmets.
 - Observation studies indicate that 50.2% of Bikers wear helmets.
- Sports Bikers are significantly more likely to wear helmets all the time than Cruisers and to believe that helmets decrease the number of fatalities.
 - 86% of Sports Bikers say they always wear their helmets compared with only 40% of Cruisers.
 - Only 1% of Sports Bikers say they never wear a helmet compared with 15% of Cruisers.

- 87% of Sports Bikers believe that helmets decrease the number of fatalities, particularly head injuries. 72% of Cruisers believe that helmets decrease the number of fatalities.
- Sports Bikers appear to have more formal training.
 - Approximately a fourth of Riders have been riding for less than a year, but Sports Bikers are more likely to have taken a training course (67%) compared with only 49% of Cruisers.
- Bike Clubs play a bigger role for Cruisers, but fewer of these clubs encourage helmet usage.
 - 44% of Cruisers belong to a Bike Club, but only 31% of those clubs encourage helmet use.
 - Only 29% of Sports Bikers belong to a club, but 89% of those clubs encourage helmet usage.
- In focus groups of Riders, many of the participants would not wear helmets, but would encourage anyone learning to ride to wear a helmet, especially their sons.
- Riders who do not wear a helmet believe they are good Riders and that helmets will not protect them sufficiently based on focus group responses.
 - The one thing that Riders really fear is being paralyzed rather than dying. Helmets are sometimes seen as making it more likely a Rider will survive, but may be paralyzed.
 - Cruisers like the image of riding without a helmet.
- Riders see police as people who know the facts about safety, yet many of them do not wear helmets.
- 86% of motorcycle riders would wear a helmet if law required it.

Recommendations

Based on the research SMS recommends focusing on encouraging younger Cruisers who are new to biking to wear helmets because young riders without formal training are most likely to get into an accidents and Cruisers are less likely wear helmets and less likely to take formal training classes.

SMS also believes that the most significant approach to more Riders wearing helmets will be to pass legislation requiring that helmets be worn at least for the first five years of receiving their license. To get this legislation passed will be very challenging, however this is the only fairly short-term method of significantly increasing the number of Riders wearing helmets.

To reduce the number of fatalities due to Motorcycle Riders not wearing a helmet SMS recommends the following approaches in order of priority:

1. Educating new Riders, particularly **new Cruisers**, to take formal training classes. In the classes helmet wearing will be taught as a smart move for Riders. More experienced Cruisers and Cruiser Clubs will also be asked to be a good influence on newer riders by encouraging them to take classes and to wear helmets.
2. Pass **legislation** to require all motorcycle riders to wear helmets all the time. This is the only approach that will make a significant change in the percent of Riders wearing helmets.

SMS believes that by following the steps below almost 1,000 more Cruisers will be wearing helmets.

New Cruisers

Based on the research new Cruisers will not naturally wear their helmets all the time. The research shows that Cruisers are less likely to wear helmets, less likely to take classes and the only time experienced Cruisers are willing to say that a rider should wear a helmet is when they are a new rider. SMS recommends using Training classes, Cruiser Clubs and more experienced Cruisers' influence to encourage these younger men to wear helmets.

Goal

- Increase the percentage of Cruisers who always a helmet from 40% to 50%.

Recommended Actions:

- Work with Cruiser Motorcycle distributors to have them encourage new riders to take training courses.
 - Develop brochures that distributors can hand out at the time of purchase.
 - Ask distributors to consider special promotions that offer free Training Courses.
 - Publicly recognize distributors that encourage formal training because they are saving lives.
- Audit all Motorcycle Training courses to ensure that they are requiring helmet use during training as well as encouraging helmet use in the future.
 - Publicly recognize these Training courses as entities that save lives.
- Create a website that is appealing to Cruisers that provides encouragement to wear helmets and provides tips on safe riding.
- Meet with Cruiser Club leaders to build support for newer riders wearing helmets.

- Provide these leaders with the information to see how they can help new Cruisers stay safer by wearing helmets.
 - Recognize Cruiser Clubs that care about new Riders.
 - Provide speakers for these clubs, especially fellow Cruisers who wear helmets and encourage younger people to also wear helmets.
- Work with the Police Department to encourage those who ride Cruisers on personal time to wear helmets. Share with them that they are role models who others look up to. Have them serve as good examples for other Cruisers.

Legislation

86% of Motorcycle Riders would wear a helmet if law required it. This will be a challenge because the general attitude toward wearing a helmet all the time is very negative. However Riders may be more receptive if the legislation focused on requiring a helmet the first five years upon receiving a license rather than trying to change everyone's behavior all at once. As discussed earlier many Riders believe that new Riders should wear a helmet while learning to ride.

Summary of Recommended Actions

| Priority | Year One | Year Two |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Influencers</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Meet with Cruiser Club leaders to share the information about accidents & new riders, the role they can play in reducing fatalities & provide them with brochures for them to distribute. Offer to provide speakers – appeal to “protecting their sons.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provide plaques & recognition to Clubs whose new riders take Training Courses & wear helmets. |
| <i>New Cruisers</i> 2,451 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Education – Audit all formal Training courses to ensure they are reinforcing proper bike riding, the dangers of riding & the use of Motorcycle helmets •Where there are gaps in programs provide recommendations on how to improve. •Prepare packets for motorcycle distributors to give to those purchasing their first bike strongly encouraging training. Work with Dealers to develop a promotion that includes the some or the entire fee for Training courses. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Via advertising & PR publicly recognize Training courses/instructors that are saving lives, likewise responsible Dealers. |
| <i>Legislation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support legislation for mandatory helmet laws possibly starting with a graduated license – must wear a helmet for the first five years of receiving a license. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Continue as long as it will take. |